

AN

1608/5249

ADDRESS

TO THE

Rev. Messrs. PIRIE, KIDSTON, HALL

AND

PEDDIE;

Containing some REMARKS upon a *Petition to the
Lords of Council and Session*, by J. BULLOCH, &c.
with the Concurrence of these Ministers for them-
selves and others.

BY THE

REV. WILLIAM WILLIS, GREENOCK.

Acts ix. 4.—*And he fell to the earth and heard a voice saying,
Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me—It is hard for thee to
kick against the pricks.*

GLASGOW,

PRINTED BY WILLIAM PATON,

For the AUTHOR, and Sold by M. OGLE---J. OGLE and
A. McLAREN, Edinburgh—J. FOWLER, Paisley—
G. LAIRD, Greenock—G. CHARLES,
Hamilton—A. McLAREN, Stir-
ling, and by others.

1799.

1608/5249

It hath been rumoured abroad, that
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Rev. Mr. Watson, their worthy par-
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cur with them in their petition. It
to be supported from the charitable
party of seceders. With respect to
rence in the petition establish the
of contradiction. But, Gentlemen,



A N

ADDRESS, &c.

REV. GENTLEMEN,

THE Petition addressed to the Lords of Council and Session with your concurrence, came to my hand, under cover, last night. I was very much astonished, indeed, in perusing said Petition, to perceive misrepresentations of facts which, you know, are already in the knowledge of the public. I have, from the beginning of your mournful apostasy, entertained an opinion that your new scheme of principles would natively lead you to persecution and intolerance. Your concurrence in this Petition to the Lords of Council and Session, confirms me in my opinion. Blessed be God, you have little power. Under God, we look to the laws of our country, with the firmest expectation that they will completely protect the faithful from your feeble rage, and from your unprovoked indignation.

It hath been rumoured abroad, that the few persons in Kilpatrick who have stated themselves in opposition to the Rev. Mr. Watson, their worthy pastor, have been encouraged in such sinful conduct by these Clergymen who now concur with them in their petition. It hath been said they are to be supported from the charitable fund which is the property of Seceders. With respect to the first, your concurrence in the petition establishes the fact beyond the power of contradiction. But, Gentlemen, be upon your guard

with respect to the fund ; remember you shall be answerable to Seceders for all your transactions in relation to that institution ; it was gathered from the Christian people in the Secession ; it is for the support of those who are of Secession principles ; it is by no means for the use of apostates from Secession principles, nor for the purposes of cruel persecution. If we come to understand that any of that money is alienated from the purposes for which it was intended by the donors, you shall be answerable, and an arrestment will be laid upon it immediately. As your concurrence with the Petitioners is publicly announced, you will not complain though the public consider you as answerable for the sentiments which are contained in the Petition. I shall now make a few observations upon some of these very extraordinary sentiments.

P. 3. " From a very early period of the Secession, the obligation of the national covenant, and of the solemn league and covenant, and by consequence the power and authority ascribed therein, and in the 23d chap. sect. 4 of the confession of faith, to the civil magistrate in regard to religion, have been matter of scruple and doubt amongst the most conscientious, pious, and well-disposed of the Seceding brethren."

Gentlemen, you have here asserted what you know to be a mistake. I call upon you for proof. All honest men in the Secession believe the whole doctrines contained in the confession of faith to be founded upon the word of God. All honest men in the Secession believe the perpetual binding obligation of our solemn covenants upon posterity. Your assertion concerning the faithful in the Secession, must be considered as a most wanton reproach, which entitles you to the rank of calumniators and accusers of the brethren until you shall by proof establish your assertion. This is what you know you never can perform. " What shall be given thee false tongue," &c. The sentiment of Mr. Brown of Haddington, in a printed Address to his Students of Divinity, is sufficient of itself to contradict your assertion. It is as follows, viz. " I now approach death, heartily satisfied with our excellent Westminster Confession of Faith, Catechisms, and form of Church Government, and cordially adhering to these covenants, by which our fathers

“bound themselves and their posterity, to profess the doctrines and practise the duties therein contained.”

I hope you will allow, that among all the ministers in the Secession, there never was a more conscientious, pious, and well-disposed individual, than the late Mr. Brown.

I am astonished to find in the 3d page of your Petition, such misrepresentation respecting Mr. Frazer's Petition to the Synod. You know we are informed in that Petition, that many of the members of Synod have adopted principles inconsistent with our Confession of Faith, and Formula. But as I know that the Lords of Council and Session have seen that Petition, there is no danger of imposition. They will see that it is a Petition to overturn the whole constitution of the Secession, whatever you or others may through ignorance or prejudice pretend to the contrary.

P. 4. “Twenty-two respectable members of the Synod, most of whom authorise the present Petition, voted against this Preamble, and wished rather to adopt the Overture of the Committee.”

In what respects, Gentlemen, do you consider these dissenters as respectable? Do you know any in the Secession who are less respectable than the twenty-two members who dissented? Is it in respect of orthodoxy and a conscientious attachment to the principles of Seceders? Is it in respect of integrity and faithfulness to their ordination engagements? Are men to be considered as still respectable, who have made a public sacrifice of their orthodoxy and their integrity upon the insignificant altar of an heretical pamphlet? Publish their reasons of dissent upon that occasion, they are in the records of Synod. Publish them with the answers by the Synod to these reasons of dissent, and the public will judge of the respectability of the twenty-two dissenters. The impartial public will judge, whether or not there are sentiments contained in these reasons of dissent, which are inconsistent with the Holy Scriptures, with the subordinate standards of the Church of Scotland, and with the laws of the kingdom. Until this is performed, their authorising the present Petition will not establish their respectability.

P. 4. “Among those who eagerly contended for the dissension of the Preamble, was the Rev. Mr. Watson, and a few others, who, though they had previously warmly

“ supported the Preamble, had in the interim, as it would
“ seem, changed their opinion.”

I am sorry, Gentlemen, that a regard to truth obliges me to contradict your assertion; you know it to be an absolute misrepresentation. Some of those who supported the motion to dismiss the Preamble, never supported the Preamble; they never changed their opinion respecting the Preamble. The dismissal of the Preamble was earnestly contended for, not by a few only, but by a great multitude of the Lord's servants and people in the Secession. But alas! they contended for their principles, at the bar of a Court where the majority of the judges were parties in the question; they accordingly lost their cause, as might have been expected. But you must answer before a higher tribunal, for your unfaithfulness and your cruel treatment of the Lord's people, who only required of you to maintain and defend their scriptural principles, according to your own solemn ordination engagements. Were not your consciences mournfully hardened by your sinful conduct, you would long before this time have professed your sorrow in the most public manner, for the offence you have given to the godly in the Secession, and the wounds you have given to our Lord Jesus Christ in the house of his friends. Consider solemnly your present mournful situation; you have the prayers of the godly through the Secession against the sinful measures you pursue with so much earnestness and virulence. May the Lord open your eyes to see your most melancholy situation and your imminent danger, ere your feet stumble upon the dark mountains of death.

P. 5. “ The result was, that 98 were of opinion that the
“ Preamble should remain for the present, and that 28
“ voted for setting aside the Preamble altogether.”

Here you have asserted another gross misrepresentation. You know it to be otherwise; you have added seven to your number who voted against our principles in the Synod. The majority by which the sinful deed was carried, comprehends two classes who were parties, and had no constitutional right to judge and vote in that important question. The first class comprehends those ministers who countenanced the admission of young men into the ministry, by a limited assent to the Formula. The second class compre-

hends those young men, who were admitted in that sinful manner. I appeal to all the intelligent and unprejudiced of mankind, if these two classes were not parties in any question respecting an alteration in the Formula, respecting our principles or terms of church fellowship. By their sinful and unfaithful conduct as stated in Mr. Frazer's Petition, they had evidently prejudged the important question. They ought to have been sifted as pannels before the Synod, to answer for their very sinful conduct. They ought to have been censured according to the oracles of God, and the rules of the church.

P. 5. "Out of these twenty-eight, seven only protested against the judgment of the court, one of whom chose to decline its authority altogether, and two more, namely, Mr. Watson of Kilpatrick, and Mr. Hyslop of Shotts, have since thought proper to join them."

Gentlemen, you have here again given a very false representation of the faithful in the Secession, in relation to the sinful deed of Synod. You know that four members immediately declined the authority of the court; you know also that the minute of Synod is sufficient to convict you of misrepresentation. I shall here insert a copy of the minute of Synod, and let the public judge. "Edinburgh, Bristo Meeting-house, 5th September, 1799, 6 o'clock after-noon, The Associate Synod met, and was constituted, Resumed the consideration of the cause respecting the Formula, and after long reasoning it was moved by Mr. James Hall, that the Synod adjourn the further discussion of this question, until a future meeting of Synod; and in the mean time appoint a committee of the house, to draw up a Synodical Address to the people of their charge, expressive of our adherence to the doctrine, worship, discipline, and government of the Church of Scotland, and for repelling the calumnious reproaches which have been circulated in the public, that the Synod has abandoned their principles, and intend what they have done in this business, to be a forerunner of future and more dangerous innovations."

"It was proposed by Mr. Willis, as a 2d motion, that the Synod dismiss the Preamble, and appoint a Committee to draw up an Address to the public, in order to remove any

“undue impressions, made upon the minds of the people.”
 “A vote was then stated, which of these motions should be
 “preferred, and the roll being called, it was found that nine-
 “ty one voted for the first, and twenty-eight for the second
 “motion.”

“Against this deed, Mr. Willis gave in the following
 “Protestation, to which Mr. Hyslop, minister, and Archd.
 “Campbell, and James Dick, elders, adhered. “I protest
 “in my own name, and in the name of all ministers, elders,
 “and private christians, who may adhere to this protest,
 “That as this Synod hath obstinately refused to remove the
 “Preamble prefixed to the Formula, and declare their sim-
 “ple and unqualified adherence to our principles, that I
 “shall no more acknowledge them as over me in the Lord,
 “until they return to their principles.

(Signed)

“WILLIAM WILLIS,
 “EBENEZER HYSLOP,
 “ARCHD. CAMPBELL,
 “JAMES DICK.”

The public will, by comparing this minute of the Synod
 with your Petition, perceive the false statement you have
 given in said Petition, to the Lords of Council and Session.
 But that the public may have an opportunity to understand
 the melancholy situation of the Secession, I shall here in-
 troduce a copy of a printed letter, dated Glasgow, June
 23d, 1798.

“AT the desire of a number of both ministers and peo-
 “ple, we have agreed to call and invite all known friends
 “of our received principles, the ministers personally, and
 “other representatives of those who are friends in each
 “congregation, to meet at Cumbernauld on Wednesday
 “the 25th of July, 1798, for prayer and conference, that
 “we may know the duty to which the Lord calls us in the
 “present distress, that something should be done in behalf
 “of our violated principles, and for the relief of our ag-
 “grieved consciences; and for this end it is agreed to lay
 “the following Propositions before the meeting:—
 “FIRST, That a joint Remonstrance and Petition be pre-
 “sented to the Synod at their next meeting, signifying
 “that they are deeply grieved and offended with
 “them for departing from their received principles

“and solemn engagements, and earnestly beseeching
 “them to return to these principles and duties which
 “they have publicly professed and sworn to maintain
 “and defend.

“SECOND, That on this ground alone, we are willing
 “(through grace) to continue our subjection to them
 “in the Lord: and we declare, that if our Petition is
 “disregarded, and the ground of our grief and offence
 “unremoved, we shall consider ourselves no longer
 “under their inspection, until they return to their
 “former ground.

“THIRD, In these circumstances we shall endeavour
 “(through grace) to display a banner for the Doctrine,
 “Worship, Discipline and Government of the church
 “of Scotland, agreeable to the original Testimony
 “emitted by the Secession.

“These are the outlines of what is intended: and in or-
 “der that the mind of the whole may be known, it will be
 “proper that this should be as extensively communicated as
 “possible, and an account of the number of adherents in
 “each congregation sent to the meeting, or if possible some-
 “time before, directed to *GEORGE DENNIE*, at *John*
 “*McLean & Co's*. King Street, Glasgow. Those who
 “cannot attend the meeting will please communicate their
 “opinion respecting the above plan. And to conclude, we
 “hope that all will endeavour to ask counsel and direction
 “of the Lord in this matter.

“Signed in name, and by appointment of the meeting,
 “*PATRICK PETER*, Clerk.

“*JOHN THOMSON*, Minister.

“*Glasgow, 23d June, 1798.*”

By this letter the reader will perceive, that many in the
 Secession have contended for their principles, in opposition
 to a current of apostacy, which, like a sweeping deluge, hath
 overflowed the Secession, and hath brought that church to
 her present melancholy situation. The meeting took place
 at Cumbernauld, when the following Petition was by un-
 animous agreement appointed to be presented to the Synod,
 which was accordingly presented, by a great number of
 Commissioners from Sessions and Congregations, the tenor
 whereof follows:

" UNTO the Reverend Moderator, and other Members of
 " the Associate Synod, to meet at Edinburgh, the 4th
 " day of September, 1798.

" The Petition of

" Humbly Sheweth,

" That upon the most mature consideration and exami-
 " nation, we are still satisfied with our received principles,
 " and can by no means approve of any alteration. However
 " small the alterations may appear which have lately taken
 " place, the fruits of these alterations have been bitter to
 " some of our religious connections, which we can by no
 " means look upon with indifference.

" In their present circumstances they cannot have sealing
 " ordinances dispensed to them in our connection, without
 " complying with what they consider sinful; the consequen-
 " ces are obvious.

" This Reverend Court may now see, that the Preamble
 " to the Formula hath not been a healing measure as was
 " expected; and we are convinced it never will be a mean
 " of keeping the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace.

" Almost every word and phrase in the preamble has a
 " doubtful signification. " *Some parts of the standard books*
 " *of this Synod have been interpreted as favouring compulsory*
 " *measures in religion.*" If the interpreters are within our
 " church, let them come from behind the curtain as honest
 " men, and own their interpretation. We consider it as
 " inconsistent with the acknowledged laws of association,
 " for any individual to act upon any private view, in opposi-
 " tion to these laws. Had this simple rule been observed,
 " much mischief in the Secession had been prevented. Com-
 " pulsory measures in religion may be taken, either for per-
 " secution for righteousness's sake; or, for the punishing of
 " Sabbath breakers, or blasphemers of the name of God.
 " *The Synod do not require an approbation of compulsory mea-*
 " *sures in religion, from any candidate at licence, or ordination;*"
 " but he may understand compulsory measures in the first,
 " or in the last, or in any other sense he may think proper;
 " and thus a door is opened for equivocation and mental re-
 " servation into the matter of a solemn vow.

" *The Synod holds the obligation of our Solemn Covenants in*
 " *posterity, but recommend it to all their members, to suppress*

“any controversy about the nature and kind of the obligation of these covenants.” This recommendation is considered as a restraint on ministerial freedom, by many friends of our professed principles; and as an attempt to bury our national vows in the grave of silence. We cannot help thinking, that this preface to the Formula is a darkening counsel by words without knowledge; and that this Synod hath not come to us with their Preamble, as the apostle came to the church of Corinth, “with great plainness of speech.” Your preface to the Formula is intended as a law. It is necessary the language should be plain, and easy to be understood: but in our humble opinion it is otherwise.

“We are willing, through grace, to keep the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace. And in our view, it is this Reverend Court, and not we, that has broke the brotherly covenant. To them we used to look as the guardians of these principles, which we had mutually professed, and solemnly engaged to maintain. Yea, we have even mutually called upon the most high God to witness that we would follow no divisive courses from them. A breach amongst us would be a grievous affliction; but if we are not agreed, let us not attempt to walk together by the means of dawbing with the untempered mortar of words, which have a doubtful signification in the matter of a solemn vow.

“Our Petition, therefore, to this Reverend Court, is, That they would immediately set aside the Preamble, and let us live together in unity and love, and walk together, if we are really agreed; that the Lord’s people among us may not have reason to apprehend, that their leaders are endeavouring to lead them from our received principles.

“We shall not further detain this Reverend Court, but only declare our adherence to the Petitions and Remonstrances which have been presented, respecting this business, so far as these contain a stedfast adherence to our received principles, and a Testimony against any alteration of, or deviation from them.

“May he who walks in the midst of the seven golden candlesticks, and holds in his right hand seven stars, turn back our captivity as streams of water, and direct this Re-

“ verend Court in all their deliberations, is the earnest prayer
“ of your, &c.”

This Petition was, after much reasoning, allowed to lie upon the table of the Synod for one year, and the prayer of it was rejected by a great majority, at last meeting of Synod. But I shall proceed with my remarks upon your Petition to the Lords of Council and Session.

P. 5. “ The Presbytery finding by Mr. Watson’s Declaration, that he is no longer in connection with the Se-
“ cession church, agreed to drop his name from the roll,
“ and declare his relation to his congregation dissolved;
“ and that all who adhere to him, cut themselves off from
“ the body; and appoint Mr. Jack to preach at Kilpatrick
“ on Sabbath first, and intimate this deed of the Presbytery
“ to the congregation.”

What dreadful infatuation and iniquity! A Court constituted in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, to declare such a manifest falsehood. They knew that Mr. Watson, instead of being no longer in connection with the Secession Church, was at that time a regular member in the only legitimate and constitutional Presbytery now in the Burgher Secession. That Reverend Gentleman’s firm attachment to the Secession Church, and because he would not forsake the Secession Church, nor violate his ordination engagements, was the reason why he had declined the forfeited authority of the Presbytery and Synod. The declaration of the dissolution of his relation to his congregation, is at once a most impudent and sinful declaration. It is an attempt to put a-
funder what the Lord hath joined together; it is the curse causeless which cannot come. The intimation of such a deed upon the Lord’s day, was an awful profanation of the holy Sabbath. The poor man who executed the sentence may think himself guiltless, but God will call him to account. According to your reasoning in the eight page of your Petition, not one of those who have supported the alterations in the Formula, can have any right to continue in your meeting-houses; according to the rules of the church, you have incurred deposition. Mr. Watson could not act according to his ordination vows, continuing in your communion, until you return to your principles.

P. 9. "Mr. Watson in the present case, has separated himself from the Associate Presbytery."

This is another misrepresentation of fact; Mr. Watson is a member of the Associate Presbytery, he hath only separated from these who have plunged themselves into apostasy from Secession principles and have forfeited their authority over Seceders.

Page 6. "On Sunday the 24th therefore, divine worship was not performed by Mr. Watson."

This is another gross misrepresentation; Mr. Watson did perform divine worship upon that day, in his congregation, though not in his meeting-house, yet in the neighbourhood. Your assertion can be contradicted by hundreds who that day attended divine worship, as performed by Mr. Watson.

Page 9. "In the mean time however, he was bound in law to retire from the congregation, because the possession of the meeting-house ought to remain upon the footing of the original foundation, and as directed by the original contributors."

If this doctrine, Gentlemen, be just, many of the preamblist clergy may look out for themselves: If the congregation of Shuttle-street act upon this principle, the consequences are very obvious. These events may, in the providence of God, take place; sooner, perhaps, than our apostate persecuting brethren expect. Verily, there is a God who judgeth in the earth. How will you answer either to God or unprejudiced men for your conduct, in introducing so many gross misrepresentations into a Petition which was to be signed by a respectable Gentleman of the law, and presented to the Lords of Council and Session.

Page 2, "Of the loyalty of this body, whether clergy or laity; of their attachment to their Sovereign and to their glorious and happy constitution, the Petitioners may be permitted solemnly to express their firm belief, that they may be equalled but not exceeded by any body or description of his Majesty's subjects."

These observations, I believe in my conscience, are just in relation to all genuine Seceders, who believe the whole doctrines in the Confession of Faith and Catechisms Larger and Shorter, to be founded upon the word of God; and

who believe the perpetual binding obligations of our solemn covenants. But they never will apply to these who are apostates from the scriptural doctrines in our subordinate standards.

Since you have raised such a cry about loyalty, I shall now drop a few hints upon a subject which I have hitherto endeavoured to consider as very delicate in the present circumstances. I now from the firmest conviction declare, that I do not believe that these who impugn or deny the magistrate's power in relation to the church of Christ, as exhibited in our excellent subordinate standards, as founded upon the word of God, can be either good or loyal subjects to his Majesty. They endeavour to deprive him of what is infinitely more valuable than his revenue. His scriptural authority given him in our subordinate standards in relation to the church of Christ, is by far the most brilliant ornament of his power—it is the brightest jewel of his crown. By this he is authorized by the scriptures and by the laws of the kingdom, to be a protector of the church in all her scriptural privileges and immunities. By this he is enabled to be a nursing father to the church of Christ, and an opportunity given him of promoting the honour and glory of Him by whom kings reign and princes decree judgment. I deny with indignation, the truth of the assertion, that they can be either good or faithful men, or loyal subjects, who entertain infidel scruples respecting the magistrate's scriptural power as exhibited in our subordinate standards.

The charge of disloyalty is an unavoidable inference from your own principles, which you publicly avow with respect to alterations in the Formula. I perceive, that the representation given in the public papers of the interlocutor of the Lords of Council and Session, removing the interdict from the meeting house of the Rev Mr. Watson, hath very much galled and given you an alarm. Hence all the clergy in the Synod, who have made a change in the Secession by prefixing an offensive Preamble to the Formula, are like a band of enraged ants come out of their dens, and are all clustered ready for the battle, upon the front of John Bulloch's Petition, upon the 11th day of December. Under the banner of John Bulloch, all the preamblist clergymen have enlisted themselves as volunteers. But here they are in

their ranks---let the Public take a view of this uncommon group as arranged by themselves and their agents, " December 11th 1799. Petition---J Bulloch and others, against inner-house interlocutor, Ja. Drummond, W. S. Agent. S. Clerk. Unto the Right Honourable, the Lords of Council and Session, the Petition of John Bulloch, miller in Duntocher, &c. with Concurrence of the Rev. Messrs. Alexander Pirie and William Kidston---for themselves and other members of the Associate Presbytery of Glasgow, and the Rev. Messrs. James Hall and James Peddie---for themselves and the other members of the Associate Synod, &c."

What a most formidable and martial association of clergymen, led on to the field of action by Mr. Bulloch the miller in Duntocher, against the Rev. Mr. Watson and his Seceders, who have refused to plunge themselves into backsliding apostasy and perjury out of compliment to the modern principles of unbounded toleration. I hope Mr. Bulloch will bestow some post in his army upon these Rev. Gentlemen.

I shall here introduce that account of the removal of the interdict which appeared in the public papers, which hath so completely roused the clergy in the Synod of the Preamblists. It deserves to be handed down to posterity in letters of gold!

" COURT OF SESSION.

" On Friday, the Court had under consideration a petition from John Douglas, farmer in Kilpatrick, and others, trustees, managers, and members of the congregation of Burgher Seceders in the parish of Kilpatrick, and county of Dumbarton, and the Reverend William Watson, minister of said congregation, for the recal of an interdict granted by the Lord Ordinary (Ankerville) obtained (says the petition) surreptitiously, the said interdict having been granted upon a bill of suspension, presented by three persons, once members of the congregation, to which the petitioners belong, without any statement on the part of the petitioners having been laid before the Lord Ordinary who granted the interdict.

" The facts upon which the petitioners rest their claim are stated in the petition in the following terms :--

" The Rev. William Watson has for near ten years offi-

“ciated as minister of a congregation of Burgher Seceders
 “in the parish of Kilpatrick, and he has always endeavour-
 “ed to discharge his duty with fidelity and zeal. He has
 “accordingly met with the approbation of the members of
 “his congregation, of whose attachment and regard he is
 “proud to boast. For some years past (it is farther stated
 “in the petition) differences have existed amongst the reve-
 “rend ministers of the Associate Synod of Burgher Seced-
 “ers, upon points connected with very important religious
 “and political doctrines. Amongst other topics which have
 “been the subject of discussion, is that which respects the
 “power of the civil magistrate, specified in the 23d chapter
 “of the Confession of Faith, which contains doctrines found-
 “ed on, and agreeable to the scriptures, as Presbyterians
 “have hitherto believed, and as, it is hoped, sincere Chris-
 “tians and loyal subjects will continue to believe. At last,
 “however, it unfortunately happened, that many of the
 “reverend members of the Associate Burgher Synod, whe-
 “ther influenced by a vain wish of preserving the appear-
 “ance of unanimity, where unanimity of sentiment did not
 “exist, or influenced by some other consideration, have so
 “far yielded to the torrent of innovation, that they have
 “thrown loose the whole important doctrines contained in
 “that chapter, and have, by what is termed by some a con-
 “ciliatory measure, left them at the mercy of every disciple
 “of democracy.

“The Rev. W. Watson (however anxious he was to
 “prevent disagreement and rupture) yet came at last to be
 “completely convinced that the measures adopted by the
 “Associate Synod were such as to strike against their own
 “standards, were such as to be hostile to the religious prin-
 “ciples he had always held, and such as to be, in their con-
 “sequences, highly injurious to the cause of loyalty and
 “good order. He therefore expressed his disapprobation
 “of these measures, and informed his Session and Congre-
 “gation of the opinion he entertained. In that opinion
 “the majority of his Session, and his Congregation, with
 “the exception of a few individuals, concurred. They
 “considered his conduct to be that of a sincere Christian,
 “and a loyal subject. Accordingly, though some few per-
 “sons, members of the Congregation, declared themselves

" to be of a different opinion from the Pastor, yet the great
 " body of the congregation adhered to him, and continued
 " to receive from him in the pulpit that instruction and in-
 " formation which he was enabled to convey. Some mem-
 " bers indeed of the congregation left it, and on the next
 " Sunday being near the beginning or middle of last month
 " (October), went to hear another Burgher preacher, who
 " had come to preach in a mill or some other place in the
 " neighbourhood, and whose sentiments were different
 " from those of Mr. Watson, he being one of those vulgarly
 " called *New-light Men*; whereas Mr. Watson has thought
 " it his duty to walk in the good old path. Mr. Watson,
 " however, after this, went on to officiate and to perform
 " his duty as minister of this Burgher congregation, and
 " the great body of the congregation continued to adhere to
 " him, and to attend divine worship at the usual place of
 " meeting.

" The petitioners moreover state, that matters remained
 " on this footing during the months of October and No-
 " vember, till, to their astonishment, on the evening of Sa-
 " turday the 23d of November, the interdict was presented
 " to some of the members of the congregation; the petition-
 " ers were little versant in such proceedings, and were de-
 " sirous of complying respectfully with what the paper in
 " question seemed to enjoin. Accordingly, neither Mr.
 " Watson, nor the other petitioners, his congregation, en-
 " tered the place of meeting on the Sunday following.
 " The petitioners decline entering into the merits of the
 " cause, until they shall give in their answer to the bill of
 " suspension; in the mean time they apply for a recal of
 " the interdict, which they state to have been most impro-
 " perly obtained by their opponents.

" The Court, after hearing Counsel on both sides, recal-
 " led the interdict, and found the interdictors liable in ten
 " guineas of expenses. Counsel for the interdictors, Mr.
 " John Connel---agent Mr. James Drummond, W. S. For
 " the Rev. Mr. Watson and the Congregation, Mr. Archi-
 " bald Campbell, and Mr. Archibald Campbell, jun.---agent
 " Mr. Robert Sym, W. S."

" There is nothing in this representation, but what can be
 " established to the conviction of all concerned. The person

who was sent to Kilpatrick to intimate the sinful and cruel deed of the preamblist presbytery of Glasgow, is represented as one of these who are vulgarly called *New-light Men*. If you consider this as a term of reproach, let the blame be attached to the twelve Stone Polishers, of profane and infamous memory. Look into the 23d page of their Congratulatory Letter addressed to the Rev. Mr. Willis, Greenock; you will there observe the term in these words: "The Synod, good and bad, *Old-light Men* and *New-light Men*, is a community of foxes---let removed ears be henceforth the symbols of sedition against the power of the magistrate, in matters of religion. The length of ours shall henceforth be the test of our orthodoxy and loyalty."

It is pretty well known, that the authors of the despicable pamphlet from which these expressions are quoted, are apostate clergymen: They were the first who applied the term *New-light Men*, in such a public manner, to the friends of alterations in the Formula. Blame these authors if you are dissatisfied with the application. It is now a very common distinction, which will attach to your names when you are gone to your place.

These profane Stone Polishers have made a feeble attempt to ridicule orthodoxy and loyalty. They inform the Public, that the length of their ears is the test of their orthodoxy and loyalty. This is a fair confession, that the twelve Stone Polishers have neither orthodoxy nor loyalty. Besides, one of your twenty-two respectable members, who were for a more extensive change of our principles than the preamble could warrant, hath long ago anticipated the charge of disloyalty, in the close of the malignant note printed at the end of his Synod Sermon. Here are his words, viz. "The lying lips of unprincipled sycophants may accuse us of disloyalty," &c.

Why such coarse and unmannerly language, if this author was not conscious to himself that the *New-light Men* have adopted principles inconsistent with loyalty and orthodoxy?

As I have that Gentleman's pitiful production now before me, I shall give the public one of his sentiments in relation to our principles, and in relation to the faithful in the Secession. That the Public may have a view of the beauties of his composition, the acumen of his wit, the force of his

reasoning, and the aptness of his similes, which, like a comely drapery, spread themselves over the whole of his performance, where you may expect many lofty sentiments bedecked with blooming beauty and all the gaudy colours of the spring: "He who opposes forbearance, insists on one of these two things; either, that those who entertain scruples shall seek relief to their consciences by leaving our church, or that they shall preserve her unity and peace, by basely professing with their lips what they do not believe in their hearts. Yes, he is determined to force his brethren to be hypocrites and liars, or to rend our society in pieces."

Let the impartial world judge of these sentiments and say, whether honest Seceders could continue in communion with such unprincipled ministers. That the Public may judge of these scruples of which mention is made by this very curious author, I shall quote another passage from his pamphlet: "Can men who have such scruples on this subject, continue to assent to the doctrine of the Confession? No, they cannot. What advantage would the church derive from their assent? Would her interests be secured by hollow professions and a pretended faith?" The Secession church hath reaped very much disadvantage by such hollow professions and pretended faith.

I shall not detain the reader with remarks upon these sentiments: They sufficiently discover themselves in their nature and tendency. We continued in connection with these unprincipled Gentlemen too long: We have now, as in duty bound, separated from them and constituted ourselves into a Presbytery; that, in our judicial capacity, we may maintain a testimony for the doctrine, worship, discipline and government of the covenanted church of Scotland, according to our ordination engagements, and give relief to the much injured and oppressed heritage of the Lord in the Secession. The Lord will make his grace sufficient for us; he will perfect his strength in our weakness; he will protect us from the rage of unprincipled opposers, and crown our labours with success.

Another of these advocates for alterations in the Formula, hath anticipated not only the charge of disloyalty, but the punishments which the crime, in his opinion, deserves. Hence, in the 35th page of his pamphlet, Mr. Lawson hath

introduced the following words: "When he (viz. the civil magistrate) claims over us that power in religious matters which our Confession gives him, the point will become interesting to us: We will then consider it maturely, and we will allow the King's power in religious as well as civil matters, if our consciences will give us leave. If they will not, we will go to Botany Bay, or to a gibbet, or a stake, rather than violate the dictates of our own minds."

This Rev. Gentleman makes conscience and the dictates of his mind here, the rule of his conduct: All Christians make the word of God the rule of faith and manners. I would advise this Rev. Gentleman to recollect, that Botany Bay is at a great distance; perhaps he might find himself sick on the passage. The gibbet is rather an untoward piece of furniture, and the hands of *Jack Ketch* are unpolished; his feelings may be fine, but his operations are conclusive. The stake is within the torrid zone, *non est habitabilis*. I would advise all these Rev. Gentlemen to avoid principles and practices, that would justly expose them to such punishments. The Government, however, in this country, is by no means intolerant: There is much more inclination to persecute, discovered by preamblist apostate clergymen, than by our civil magistrates. I would wish rather to have the power of the civil magistrate, as pointed out in the sacred oracles and in our subordinate standards, supported to the uttermost, than see any part of that power exercised by the miller of Dun ocher and his persecuting followers, who concur with him in his Petition to the Lords of Council and Session. God forbid we should ever see the power of the sword in the management, or under the influence of, a Pirie, Kidston, or Hall. Then, indeed, the friends of truth and faithfulness might tremble! But these Gentlemen may fret, bite the lip, and gnash their teeth against the faithful in the Secession; we can smile at their contemptible efforts and at their unprovoked indignation. These Gentlemen have now fairly appeared, it may be supposed, in their proper character: They have commenced a persecution of the faithful; we are very willing to meet them at the bar of the Court of Session. We know that our cause will there obtain an impartial trial: We could not obtain this at the bar of the Associate Synod, where many of the judges have declared

themselves parties in the cause. These who seek nothing but justice have no occasion to be afraid of the law.

The four following propositions will enable the Public to form a judgment of these alterations in the Formula, which have now produced a separation from the Synod.

PROP. 1st, Many members of Synod have adopted sentiments inconsistent with the Confession of Faith and Formula: They have informed the Synod that they found these heretical sentiments in a pamphlet.

PROP. 2d, They have admitted young men to the ministry, who declared that they had adopted these heretical sentiments. They admitted these young men by a limited assent to the Formula, contrary to their own most solemn engagements.

PROP. 3d, That the greater part of the members of Synod detest some of the scriptural doctrines, contained in our subordinate standards.

PROP. 4th, That they would cut themselves off from the Secession and from every denomination of Presbyterians in the kingdom, were they honestly to declare their real sentiments.

These four Propositions are published, in the most unequivocal language, in Mr. Fraser's Petition to the Synod, and in the 47th page of Mr. Lawson's pamphlet.

I shall now, Gentlemen, conclude my Address. May the Lord have compassion upon you: May he open your eyes to see the sinfulness of your conduct, and make you lovers of truth and holiness. You will then have a regard for the unity and peace of the church, in consistency with truth and faithfulness, and love to all that love our Lord Jesus Christ.

I am,

REV. GENTLEMEN,

Your humble Servant,

OBJECT. XXI. "To allow magistrates a power, of judging, making and executing laws, about religion, and of punishing men for erroneous opinions, or for disturbing the peace and order of the church, as in our Confession of Faith and Second Book of Discipline, altogether confounds the kingdom of Christ with the kingdoms of this world, contrary to John xviii. 36." ANSW. Sir, Have you in an honest and orderly manner, renounced these Confessions of Faith, as plainly and publicly as you solemnly avowed, if not also, subscribed a stedfast adherence to the Westminster one, at your ordination? Dare you, one day, call God, angels and men to witness, that you sincerely avow that Confession of Faith to be the Confession of your Faith, and that you sincerely believe the *whole doctrine* contained in it, to be founded on the word of God, and will constantly adhere to and maintain the same all the days of your life;---and the next, slight, reproach, revile and attempt to confute an important article of it? (2.) Have you suffered as much for a zealous maintenance of the intrinsic power of the church, and of Christ's sole headship over her as his spiritual kingdom, as the compilers and cordial adherers to that Confession have done? If not, modesty as well as equity, might have restrained your revilings. (3.) Suppose that, contrary to my judgment, I should allow, that magistrates *as such* have not that power relative to religious matters mentioned in our Confessions, and solemnly avowed in our Covenants, yet, being Christians, they are bound *as such* to execute their civil offices in that manner which most effectually promotes the honour and kingdom of Christ,---even as parents or masters, who are Christians, are bound to exercise their power in their families, as may best maintain and propagate the knowledge, faith, and obedience of the gospel. Every other character or office, which a Christian hath, must be subordinated to his character as a Christian. 1 Pet. iv. 11. Col. iii. 17. Eph. v. 21,---33. vi. 1,---9. Col. iii. 18,---25. iv 1. 1 Tim. ii. 1, 2, 3. Tit. iii. 1,---10. iii. 2. 1 Pet. ii. 11,---20. and iii. 1,---7. Rom. xiii. (4.) If to prevent confounding of the kingdom of Christ with the kingdoms of

this world, magistrates who are heads of large political families, must be excluded from all that care about religion, which is allotted them in our Confession of Faith. Heads of families, must, for the same reason, be excluded from establishing the gospel-worship of God in their houses, and from instructing their children or servants in the truths of divine revelation, at least from requiring them to attend such instructions and worship. You pretend, there is a difference; But, Sir, I insist on your stating it precisely, and proving from scripture and reason, that headship over families; or, that magistrates cannot without sin, do what is similar to every thing which parents and masters, as such, are commanded to do. (5.) If, to prevent the confounding of the church with the state, magistrates must exercise no care about religion,---must punish no publicly obstinate heretic, blasphemer, idolater, profaner of the Sabbath, or reviler of the oracles and ordinances of Christ, *as a criminal against the welfare of the state*,---Church-courts must censure, *as scandals* against the welfare of the church, no theft, murder, robbery, treason, unlawful war, perversion of civil judgment, or the like; as these pertain to the kingdoms of this world. (6.) Though the powers of civil and ecclesiastical government be *coordinate*, each standing on its proper basis, and the right exercise of church power contributing mightily to the welfare of the state,—and of civil power to the advancement of the church,—yet they are not *collateral*, inseparable from, or dependent upon each other, but are altogether distinct from, and different, in many respects.”

Mr. BROWN.

WHEN a church, in her representative character, becomes so corrupt and imperious, so degenerate and incorrigible, she stands in the same situation as an individual member would do in a pure church, who should obstinately maintain the same dangerous opinions, or do the like things. The warrant for cutting off that member from communion with the body is precise and evident, Matth. xviii. 15. to 18. Rom. xvi. 17, 18. 1 Tim. vi. 3, 4, 5. 2 Tim. iii. 10, 11.: and upon the same principles, it is the duty of the lesser

number in an incorrigible corrupt church, to withdraw from the communion of the body. A separation, proceeding on such grounds, is not made from the constitution of the Christian church, its principles, or adherents; but, being made by the smaller number, is to be construed a resolved attachment unto that constitution, which they see, with concern, rendered useless, by the weight of power in the possession of its dangerous enemy, though affecting to bear the name and appearance of a friend.

“ WHEN error, corruption, and vice, become intolerably gross, and general in any particular church; and when she is deaf to all regular means of conviction,---the constitution of the apostolic churches has provided, as an expedient for a reformation, that the lesser number in her communion, who retain their integrity, shall withdraw from the corrupt body. --Perhaps the prosecution of this measure may not bring about a general reformation in the church, that has departed from the faith, obedience, and liberty of the truth; yet hereby the lesser number will, like the few names Christ had even in Sardis, preserve their own garments undefiled,” Rev. iii. 14,

Warning against Popery.

2 Cor. vi. 14.---18. “ Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness? and what concord hath Christ with belial? or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel? and what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? for ye are the temple of the living God; as God saith, I will be their God, and they shall be my people. Wherefore come out from among them my people, and be ye separate, saith the Lord almighty.” Compared with Rev. xviii. 4

THE END.

